



**Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Council of The Council of The  
Catholic Women's League of Canada**

*Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God's Call*  
**Communiqué No. 5**

**Date: January 15, 2017**

**To: Chairpersons of Education and Health / Parish Presidents / Provincial President /  
Provincial Executive / Life Members / National Chairperson of Education and Health  
From Margaret Fitzpatrick, Provincial Chairperson of Education and Health**

**Mental Health**

In support of the Catholic Women's League initiative to end the stigma related to mental illness, we are encouraged to participate in "**Bell Let's Talk Day**" – **January 25, 2015**. Every time you talk, text and join in on social media on January 25, Bell will donate five cents more to mental health initiatives. Contact relatives and friends so they can help, too!

The following website has a complete toolkit along with helpful suggestions and information (<http://letstalk.bell.ca>). Included are suggestions for 5 simple ways to end stigma and start a conversation:

- Language matters – Consider what you say, words can help but they can also hurt.
- Educate yourself – Knowing the right words to use and understanding how to speak correctly with someone experiencing a mental illness can make all the difference.
- Be kind – A smile and simple acts of kindness can help open up the conversation and let someone know you care.
- Listen and ask – Sometimes it's best just to listen and ask how you can help.
- Talk about it – Break the silence. Starting a conversation is the first step towards eliminating stigma.

There is a program called **Mental Health First Aid**. This course is designed to teach participants how to recognize and help people who are displaying signs of mental health problems or who are experiencing a mental health crisis. The website for information about this program is Mental Health First Aid Canada / [info@ns.sja.ca](mailto:info@ns.sja.ca).

An edition of the newsletter Homewood Health, forwarded by Fran Lucas, National Education and Health Chairperson, offers lots of good information to share on mental health. The article is called Recognizing the Signs. Visit: vitality\_en\_q416 (in this issue [connect.northlands.com](http://connect.northlands.com))

**Resolution 2016.02 Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide**

The federal government has begun a consultation process in the revision of Canada's Food Guide. An up-dated user-friendly version is expected to be published in 2018. In the meantime,

the Guide can still be used to help make healthy choices in eating well. A suggested addition to the guide would include the use of pulses (dried peas, beans, lentils, chickpeas). Eating half a cup of pulses has been determined by nutritionists to provide a meaningful amount of nutrition. Paying attention to serving sizes and using the healthy plate method (filling half a plate with vegetables, adding a quarter starch and a quarter protein) are also recommended.

### **Resolution 2016.03 Warning Labels on Food and Drug Products for all Inactive Substances and Additives**

Progress is being made in this area as well. The Honourable Jane Philpott, Minister of Health, announced amendments to the Food and Drug Regulations to make the Nutrition Facts table and list of ingredients on packaged foods easier for Canadians to understand. A front-of-package approach that highlights sodium, sugars and saturated fats is proposed. All food colours will be declared by their common name rather than the generic term “colour” and the list of ingredients and allergen information will be easier to read. Health Canada’s Healthy Eating Strategy is a work in progress. The food industry has until 2021 to make recommended changes. We can still continue to express our concerns as in the action plans for this and the former resolution. We will continue to monitor government’s response.

### **Health and Wellness**

We are reminded to consider getting the flu shot – even if you are healthy, you want to protect those who might not be able to fight the virus. People at high risk of influenza-related complications or hospitalization include:

- Residents of nursing homes and other chronic care facilities
- People 65 years of age and older
- Indigenous peoples
- Adults and children with a number of chronic health conditions
- Pregnant women
- Children younger than 60 months of age

### **Environment**

Pope Francis has added a new work of mercy – “care for our common home”. He proposes that we see it as both a spiritual and a corporal work of mercy. As a spiritual work of mercy, it calls for a “grateful contemplation of God’s world”. As a corporal work of mercy, it requires “simple daily gestures which break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness”. Our challenge is to implement this new work of mercy in our councils and in the community. Please share your council’s ideas and suggestions.

Happy New Year to all!

Margaret Fitzpatrick  
Provincial Chairperson of Education and Health